



Freedom Trail Map – Courtesy of National Park Service

Introductory Section

Letter of Transmittal

Acknowledgements

Commonwealth Organizational Structure

Principal Commonwealth Officers

Advisory Board to the Comptroller

Certificate of Achievement



Paver

Boston Common



Originally owned by William Blackstone who came to Boston in 1622, the Boston Common is America's oldest public park and the starting point of the Freedom Trail. Situated on 44 acres of open land, it was used as a common pasture for grazing cattle owned by the townspeople of Boston. The Common later became a "trayning" field for the militia and was used as a British Army camp during the occupation of Boston.

Over many generations, the Common has been the site of hangings, duels, public celebrations and spirited oratory. The gallows were removed in 1817 and 20 years later the grazing of cattle was forbidden. After the War of 1812, it was declared a "pleasure ground" and it was formally landscaped.

The Common is located in the heart of downtown Boston and is linked to the Public Garden, the first botanical garden in the country and home to the famous swan boats since 1877.

Today people use the Common as a gathering and meeting place throughout the seasons. Abundant flower displays herald spring, children frolic in the Frog Pond in summer and picnickers enjoy a series of free concerts, the magnificent trees are a riot of color in the fall and in winter are illuminated with lights. Boston was the first city to host a New Year's celebration — First Night — and each year Ice Sculptures appear all throughout the Common.